

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 04308 150529Z

ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 IO-14 EB-08 DODE-00 SSO-00

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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6076

UNCLAS WELLINGTON 04308

DEPT PASS NOAA, OVERSEAS OPERATIONS DIVISION

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: TGEN, WMO, NZ, CW

SUBJECT: PENRHYN ISLAND WEATHER PROJECT

REF: STATE 205276

1. NZ DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION, WHO IS ALSO DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION FOR THE COOK ISLANDS GOVT., INFORMS US THROUGH MR. MUNSTER (NZ METEOROLOGICAL SVC - NZMS) THAT THE AIRSTRIP AT PENRHYN LACKS STANDARD CIVIL CLEARANCES FOR HEAVY AIRCRAFT, BUT THAT THE USE OF A USAF C-130 COULD BE APPROVED. MUNSTER NOTES THAT DESPITE THE CONDITION OF THE RUNWAY AND APPROACHES, RNZAF C-130'S, WITH THEIR MULTIPLE UNDERCARRIAGES AND BETTER FLYING CHARACTERISTICS, HAVE USED THE STRIP WITHOUT PROBLEMS IN RECENT YEARS. IF YOU DECIDE TO USE A USAF C-130, PLEASE COMMUNICATE YOUR CLEARANCE REQUEST THROUGH THE EMBASSY.

2. ALL FLIGHTS FROM OUTSIDE THE COOK ISLANDS TO PENRHYN WOULD FIRST HAVE TO CLEAR CUSTOMS AT RAROTONGA UNLESS A WAIVER IS GRANTED BY THE COOK ISLANDS GOVT. THE AIRPORT MANAGER AT RAROTONGA, WHO IS ACTING IN A LIAISON CAPACITY FOR THE NZMS, IS LOOKING INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF A WAIVER.

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3. YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT THE RADAR UNIT HAS ARRIVED AT RAROTONGA. WILL IT BE TRANSPORTED TO PENRHYN BY AIR OR SEA? PLEASE NOTE ALSO THAT AVIATION GASOLINE IS IN SHORT SUPPLY AT RAROTONGA. THERE, HOWEVER, IS NO SHORTAGE OF JET FUEL.

4. DR. TOM DAVIS, THE NEW PREMIER OF THE COOK ISLANDS, INFORMED US DURING A MEETING HERE ON AUGUST 12 THAT HIS GOVERNMENT FORMALLY APPROVED THE PROJECT IN THE PAST WEEK. IT, NEVERTHELESS, STILL NEEDS GNZ APPROVAL BEFORE BECOMING FINAL.

5. PLEASE DIRECT YOUR COMMUNICATIONS TO THE EMBASSY AND THE NZMS, AS APPROPRIATE. THE LATTER WILL TAKE CARE OF ALL COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE COOKS.
SELDEN

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